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# VITICULTURE NUMBER

# FOR CALIFORNIA

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THE CALIFORNIA PROMOTION COMMITTEE

SAN FRANCISCO

# FOR CALIFORNIA.

AUGUST, 1905.

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(THE STATE CENTRAL ORGANIZATION)

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# FOR CALIFORNIA

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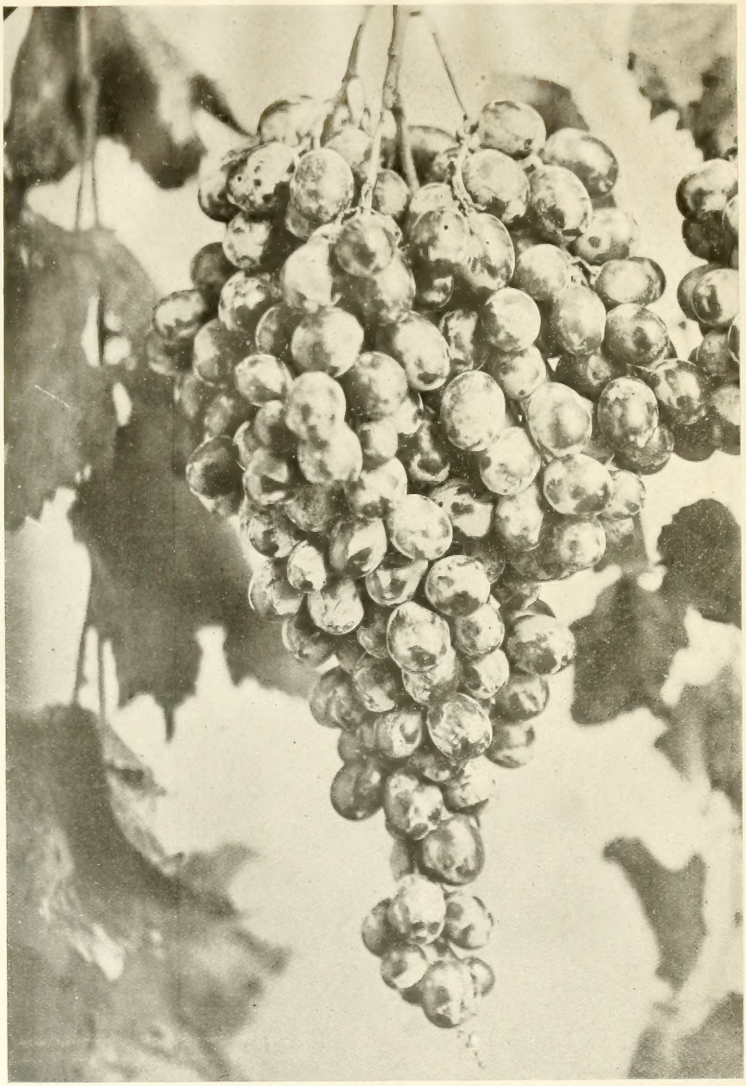

ART REVEALED IN NATURE—A CLUSTER OF CALIFORNIA GRAPES

# California Table Grapes

FRANK T. SWETT

FROM time to time for over a hundred years attempts have been made to grow European varieties of grapes east of the Rockies, but without commercial success. There are too many climatic incompatibilities. Cold winters freeze, hot, humid summers breed fungoid diseases of the vine, and copious summer rains split and rot the tender berries.

But in California the fine varieties from Spain, France and Asia Minor find themselves even better off than in their original homes on the shores of the warm Mediterranean. There are dozens of climates west of the Sierras, but the vine adapts itself to all of them. The Sultanina, the beautiful white seedless variety often prosaically called "Thompson's Seedless" shows itself a close observer of the thermometer by ripening in June on the banks of the Colorado River. It ripens a hundred days later, in the cool climate of the shores of San Francisco Bay, at Martinez, and between whiles in a hundred other localities.

There are perhaps ten thousand acres of California soil devoted to table grape growing. Most of the product is shipped to other States, New York and Chicago being the most notable markets, but so thorough is the distribution that no village in the United States goes without. About two million crates, each holding four square baskets of six pounds each are shipped annually. This foots up a little over a half pound of California grapes for each American stomach.

The Flame Tokay, originally from Spain, is the leading variety. Its large clusters of flame red berries whose thick skins and firm pulp enable it to stand long distance shipments, make it a favorite everywhere. Probably two-thirds of the annual shipments are of this fine variety. Later in the season, when the fall rains have put an end to the Tokay shipments, comes the Red Emperor, with a more rain-resistant skin, and large oval berries of a darker shade of red. While hardly as attractive to the palate, its beauty and remarkable keeping qualities assure its sale at fancy prices. Wealthy New Yorkers, who want a fine table decoration frequently pay a dollar a bunch for the finest clusters. A bright California woman, Mrs. Dr. Sherman, of Fresno, has put so much originality, skill and conscience into growing and marketing this variety that her brand of Emperors has become famous and remarkably profitable.

From July to December the trains of refrigerator cars are going Eastward over the Sierras, grape-laden. During that time thousands of men and women find employment in picking and packing. The picking is usually done by men, and though it requires care in the selection of ripe, well-colored clusters and their handling without injury to the bloom, it is the least of the work. Hauled in picking trays to the farmers' packing sheds, the clusters are minutely searched by women and girls armed with scissors, and each bruised, under-sized, unripe, or otherwise defective berry is trimmed out. The bunches are then skilfully laid in the crates, covers nailed on, hauled to the cars, and started on their ten days' journey to Eastern markets.

The leading table grape district is about half way between San Francisco and the Sierras, extending through the rich valley soils of Sacramento and San Joaquin counties.

On rich soil the usual product is from four to eight tons of first-class grapes to the acre. The cost of the best land varies from $80 to $150 an acre. To plant a vineyard, grafted on phylloxera-resistant roots, cultivate it, stake it, and care for it for the four or five years until it comes into bearing costs from $100 to $125 an acre in addition. This is not inclusive of buildings and sheds. The annual care of a bearing vineyard, not including interest or taxes, or picking the crop, varies from $15 to $25 an acre.

Where all conditions are favorable, and skill and conscience is put into the culture and packing, profits of $100 to $200 an acre are sometimes realized.

The shipments from California are increasing annually, and new acreages are being planted. With a very moderate increase in the per capita consumption of grapes there would seem to be room for a considerable expansion of the business. A half-pound per capita seems a ridiculously small allowance for any hungry, fruit-loving American citizen.

# RAISINS.

GEO. F. STANIFORD, Secretary Fresno Chamber of Commerce

THIS industry is an important one in the production of California. The acreage of this product is conservatively fixed at 70,000 acres of producing vineyard, yet, during the past five years, many thousands of acres of raisin grapes have been planted, and it is quite safe that California to-day has between seventy-five and eighty thousand acres of raisin producing vines.

The importance of the industry is that, as a separate product, more growers are interested, there being about 3,500 California growers who produce raisins, and the result of about $3,000,000 income from the product every year causes an active circulation of money that is beneficially appreciated by the grower and merchant.

Raisins produce from $50 to $150 per acre, owing to soil. Aside from one or two localities in the West, California is the only raisin producer of the United States. The system and method of marketing the product compares with the imported raisin in packages and quality, and at least 50 per cent of the California product is being placed on the American market in one pound cartoons of seeded raisins—seeded, cleansed and pure of any processing—ready for use in the preparation of puddings, pies, cakes, and for any other use that currants and raisins are required. These goods are sold in the East at 10 to 12½c per pound, and are a household necessity, as there is no labor needed in seeding raisins as in the olden days.

Being a home product the American people should realize that in California, one of their own States, raisins are being produced by a community of farmers who expect and hope that consumers will buy their own home product; superior in quality and modernized by machinery, placing the raisin package in the kitchen of American homes ready for use without even washing.

This product of California is commended to the housewife, therefore use it and encourage home production, particularly when you are securing a superior article for the purpose you intend it. If the consumers of our own country can realize that California is producing from 80,000,000 to 120,000,000 pounds of raisins annually for the American market, why not encourage our own advancement and use California raisins.

California raisin production:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1902 | 100,000,000 | pounds |
| 1903 | 120,000,000 | " |
| 1904 | 80,000,000 | " |
| 1905 estimated | 90,000,000 | " |

These results produce 4,000 to 6,000 ten ton carloads annually.

Drying grapes for raisins forms one of the most prominent features of viticulture as carried on in California. For the last four years average output has been 94,750,000 pounds. Yet, strange to say, this branch of the industry is carried on in California alone. How very expensively it is carried on here the above figures do not show of themselves. But to produce an average crop of raisins, 330,750,000 pounds of grapes are required. Perhaps California is the only State which can afford to divert such a large part of its grape yield to drying for raisins. It certainly pays, however, for the average value of raisins during the last four years has been $4,374,125.

# WHAT CALIFORNIA OFFERS TO THE VITICULTURIST.

Professor E. M. TWIGHT

THOSE who have not travelled through the vineyards of other lands, who have not studied the methods of cultivating and handling grapes and of wine-making in use in foreign countries, can certainly not appreciate the many advantages that California offers to the practical vineyardist.

If we go through the principal wine-making districts of Europe we find that each locality possesses only a limited number of varieties and produces only a certain local type of wine. Very little, if anything, is done towards trying other varieties or making other types of wine.

Thus we find that in the vineyards of the south of France the Aramon, Carignane, Grenache, Cinsaut, Bouschets, O'Eillade, Mataro, Colombeau, Ugni Blanc, are used to make the ordinary "Vin ordinaire." In the valleys of the southeast the Syrah, Mondeuse, Persan, Hibou, Durif, Pulsard, Trousseau, Govai, Roussanne, Marsanne, give wines of a little better grade. In Burgundy the Gamais, Pinots, Cesar, and in Medoc the Cabernets, Verdot, Cot, Semillion, Sauvignon, furnish the material for the famous "crus" of Bordeaux and Bourgogne. In the Cognac region the Folle-Blanche, is turned into a white wine that will make the "Cognac" brandy.

If we go to Portugal and Spain the Alvarelhao, Bastardo, Mourisco, Donzellinho, Verdelho, Pedro Ximenes, Listan, Almunacar, Ferrar, Bobal, are used to make the renowned brands of these countries. We could go through the vineyards of Italy, Hungary, Germany and again find different varieties different types of wines, each section thinking they have the varieties best adapted to their district.

If we come back to the United States and go through the vineyards of our Eastern States, we see again different varieties, but here it is no more the Vitis Vinifera that is found in its numerous forms as in Europe, but the native grapes have been selected; often, however, these native varieties of Vitis have been crossed with the Vinifera to improve the appearance, flavor or bearing.

Is it only the wish to produce a certain type that makes each locality choose only a few varieties? In the districts where the "Grands Crus" are made, no doubt this is one of the most important factors, but the soil, the climate and the diseases that they may help to implant have generally brought a natural selection that in some instances could not be prevented. In the Eastern States the planting of Vinifera varieties has been repeatedly tried, but they cannot stand the attacks of the fungi disease that thrive on the vine during the moist summer months; the cold winters also may do them some damage. In a similar way since the introduction of some of those diseases (Peronospora, Black Rot, Anthracnose) some vineyard sections of Europe had to replant new varieties more resistant to the attacks of these diseases, and this brought a change in the local type of wine manufactured.

In California we find in our vineyards varieties from all the vineyard districts of the world: France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Hungary, Germany, even Greece and Persia have furnished their best stocks. All thrive well in their new home. The dry summers of California are not favorable to the spread of the fungi diseases so dangerous in most vine growing countries.

It is evident that varieties of grapes imported from so many different lands cannot do equally well in all locations, but a place for all of them can be found in California. Thus in the cooler districts of the coast, and on the higher locations the varieties from Alsace, Germany, Northern France and Italy find a natural habitat. Further inland in the counties of Santa Clara, Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, Sonoma, the finest grades of dry wines can be made from the choicest French and Italian varieties.

## WHAT CALIFORNIA OFFERS—E. H. TWIGHT

In the interior valleys of the Sacramento, San Joaquin and tributaries the natural choice would be towards the planting of early table grapes, raisin grapes and those Spanish and Portuguese varieties best suited to the manufacture of sweet wines such as Port, Sherry, Maderas, Moscatels.

It is to be noticed that when the planting of vineyards was in its infancy in California, little was known about the newly imported varieties or about the soil and climate where they were planted, as a result a very arbitrary distribution is found in the older vineyards. This is being remedied in the newer plantations. This indifferent plantation of the early days brought out, however, some valuable information showing that a change in climatic conditions greatly affected the chemical composition* of the grapes so that a fair quality of sweet wine could be made from varieties that had always been transformed into dry wines and vice versa. With the introduction of modern methods of wine-making, the use of cooling devises during fermentation, the use of pure yeast, of more competent wine-makers, many districts of California that to-day manufacture only sweet wines or raisins, will be able to produce some dry wines of very good value for blending and even direct consumption.

In the care of the vineyards we find that California is really leading most countries as their improved implements greatly reduce the cost of cultivation.

Again the concentration of the manufacture of wine in large plants has had the advantage of improving the machinery for the handling of the grapes, pomace and wine, this has brought a cleanliness in the wineries that is seldom found in small plants where most of the work is done by hand or rather crude machinery. Few wineries in the old world can boast of the improved crushers, must pumps, conveyers of grapes and pomace, presses, steam and electric pumps, electric lights that are in daily use in our California wineries.

However, in our methods of fermentation, in our handling of wines after fermentation, we do not find the skill of the old world's "Maitre de Chai." The wine man, the vineyard man, whatever may be their practical knowledge, seldom has the scientific training that we find in the same class of men abroad. The reason is mainly that we have no practical training school of viticulture and wine-making. The College of Agriculture of the University of California, has for years offered courses in those branches, but the location of the college, and no doubt also, the lack of funds, have prevented the giving of practical courses, that are so needed in this line of study, to complete a theoretical training. Here the teaching of these branches has been part of a general agricultural education; in France and Italy, where we find the best schools of viticulture and enology, the general agricultural education is part of the training in "viticulture and enology." With the foundation of a university farm, provided by the last Legislature, we have a bright prospect for the creation of new courses of practical value to the vineyardists and wine-makers. It is to be hoped that special degrees will be offered along those lines so as to encourage graduates with a practical and scientific training such as the colleges of Montpellier, Grignon, Conegliano have sent out all over the world.

Another point on which California enjoys special privileges is in the cheapness of the redwood cooperage. Whereas in other countries they have had to resort to concrete, armed cement, glass, to make fermenting tanks, in California the redwood tank has been found to be just as good as oak to make fermenting tanks, and much cheaper than all oak substitutes. The many advantages set forward by the manufacturers of armed cement and glass tanks, will not always withstand a careful examination, and the redwood tank will hold the lead for a long time to come. The modern methods for the preservation of water will favor the stay of the wooden tank; one of the objections against these being that if they were kept full of water between seasons, the water would spoil and contaminate the tanks, while if they were left empty they would fall to pieces.

Probably one of the greatest boons to the manufacturer of wine is the abundance of water in most localities of this State. This is not only extremely useful for cleaning purposes, for boilers, stills, sprinkling, but with the introduction of modern methods of cooling in fermentation, it will prove invaluable. In Algeria, cooling has been resorted to for many years, and the writer remembers seeing some of the first attmpts that were made there in 1891-92, but the great drawback was the lack of water. Often cistern water has to be used, and in some places the roofs of the buildings not being able to collect enough water during the rainy season to supply the cellar through the year, they had to prepare a cement suface on the ground to collect more water into the cistern. In California all through the interior valleys where cooling is mostly needed we find irrigation canals ready to furnish water to the coolers, and wells can be dug and water pumped at a nominal figure.

With all those points in its favor there can be no doubt as to the great future of the different viticultural industries of California; this future will be still greater when the people will realize what a temperance agent and what a healthful product is the pure wine that our soil produces.

*Viniticultural Report 1896, Agricultural Experiment Station, Berkeley.

Vineyard lands vary in price, but the average cost is probably $200 per acre for land with bearing vines at least four years old. The cultivating of such grape land, including interest on the investment may run from $20 to $35, or even $40 to $75 an acre. Returns from vineyards run an extraordinary gamut, seldom falling below $100 and frequently reaching $500 per acre. Many of these California vineyards are very great in extent, covering 500 acres each. The larger ones contain from 1,000 to 2,500 acres each. That of the late Senator Stanford was over seven miles long, and included nearly 5,000 acres.

# California Wines For All The World

ANDREA SBARBORO.

MANY are the productions in which California excels. Its oranges and lemons find favor throughout the United States and other countries. Its fruit of diverse quantities is furnished fresh, dried or in cans, to consumers all over the world. In fact, California seems to grow some of the products of every land, and often times in great abundance. Among all the States of the Union, the grape, both for raisin and wine purposes, is produced only in California to the same perfection as in France, Italy and Spain.

Already California is not only supplying the people of the United States with its delicious wines, but the people of England, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, and the inhabitants of China, Japan and the Orient are purchasing California wines, for which they pay higher prices and which they prefer to the wines of Europe.

Nothing cheaper can be used in making wine in California than the pure juice of the grape. Though inferior goods are dear at any price, yet the statement is literally true, for the grape in California yields a large tonnage per acre, and on account of California's favorable climate and the modern appliances used, it can be turned into wine at a minimum cost. Whilst the wines of Europe are generally made in small wineries and kept in diminutive casks, California contains the largest wineries in the wide world and the wines are here stored in cooperage of immense size.

While in Europe the special varieties of grapes are only produced in

certain localities, it is surprising that in many parts of California there may be seen growing to perfection in rows, miles and miles in length and side by side, the most diversified assortment of many of the finest varieties of the Old World grapes—grapes of the excellence of generations, from which come the most noted vintages of the earth, and which are in Europe found in regions often far removed. Take, for instance, Sonoma County, a region with which I am particularly familiar, and, therefore, may not inappropriately mention with a view of illustrating California's remarkable diversity as a wine-producing State. I know that others can give the same convincing testimony in regard to other parts of California. Among the undulating hills of Sonoma County, a beautiful region strangely like Italy, may be seen in vast orchards and reaching perfection, the Chianti of Florence, the Barolo and Barbera of Piedmont, Italy; the Reisling and Deidesheimer of the Rhine; the Sauterne, the Cabernet and the Burgundy grape of France, and the grape which produces the delicious port, sherry and Madera type in Spain and Portugal.

These juicy grapes are turned into wines as delicious and with the same bouquet and flavor as those made in Europe.

The large scale on which wine is made in California is one of the reasons for pure wine at a minimum of cost. Rows of hundreds of wine tanks holding from twenty-five thousand to fifty thousand gallons each are not uncommon in California. California boasts the largest wine cistern in the world. This is the famous 500,000 gallon wine tank in Sonoma County. It is built of solid masonry under a hill. After it was first emptied one hundred couples of prominent citizens danced in its capacious interior to the music of a military band. The remarkable celebration of a ball in a wine tank was the most unique demonstration of the great scale on which wine-making is now conducted in California. It is a fact attested by all travelers that in those countries where wine is drunk nationally and wine-drinking prevails among the people there is little or no drunkenness. In Paris, for instance, wine is the workman's liquid meat and bread. In the humblest home in France, where the table is often devoid of a single dish of nourishing food, a liter bottle of excellent red wine can be found. A gentleman who recently returned from Europe commented on the fact that he had seen hundreds of men, women and children sipping their wine and eating their bread on benches in the public parks. "But I saw no one of them intoxicated," he added. "In all the time in Paris I saw only one drunken man, and he had been drinking absynth."

The fact is that wine as used by those who habitually drink it at meals is not an intoxicant.

Before beginning to take wine customarily, one should have some notion how to enjoy it. No wine should be used at breakfast, but might well be had to accompany luncheon and the evening repast. At first, persons unaccustomed to using wine should commence by mixing their claret with water—half and half. The whole pleasure of the beverage is destroyed if one empties one's goblet at a single swallow; instead, it should be sipped. Later, if desirable, the water may be diminished and of claret increased. It is always proper, however, especially for women and children, to drink wine mixed with water.

The pure sweet wines of California, such as port, sherry and angelica, should be used in dainty glasses before and after the repast. Dry white wine is generally used at the commencement of the meal, with oysters and fish. The roasts and entrees are greatly aided when accompanied by claret or burgundy. With the dessert, for one who can afford it, one glass of sparkling muscat or other brands of Cailfornia champagne will be found very pleasant and finish off the meal with delightful satisfaction.

But at present the wine industry in California is not being exercised to its full possibility. The cause is largely that we are not in the habit of drinking wine with the meals. One reason why our wines are not generally used at table by persons living in hotels or accustomed to dine at restaurants

is that while they may have a good meal for twenty-five cents or a better one for fifty cents, if they order a pint bottle of wine they will be charged twenty-five cents extra for ordinary wine and from fifty to seventy-five cents for a pint of extra good wine. Such prices are exorbitant and wholly unreasonable. Every hotel in the United States can afford to serve a pint bottle of sound good wine for fifteen to twenty cents and of choice old vintage of California wine for forty to fifty cents. If sales were made at these prices, they would increase greatly and a rise in profit would certainly result; in fact, the increase would be tenfold.

With such an increase, California wine production would assume its proper place among wine-making countries. As a matter of fact, to make the wine industry of California profitable, the consumption of wine must be materially increased. A few days ago two gentlemen owning large tracts of land called on one of the largest wine grape growers and wine makers of California and asked him his advice as to setting out wine grapes on their land. He answered very pointedly and truthfully in saying:

"When we Americans will become educated to the use of wine at our tables, then you may set out your land in grapes for wine making with assurance of success, but until that happy period arrives, I would advise you to set out other crops, as with the present limited consumption, there are more vineyards producing wine grapes in the State than are required to supply the demand."

But let the market demand increase almost without limit, California's supply can increase just as much. This State has the climate, soil, and facilities for producing just as much wine and of as good quality as that produced in France, and when the demand will warrant it, California will produce one billion gallons of wine, from which it will derive three hundred million dollars per annum, the amount that product now gives to France.

In the last five years the number of acres in California devoted to the sweet wine industry has been increased by upwards of 70,000 acres. In 1901, according to the returns of the County Assessors, there were in California of bearing vines 202,000 acres, and of non-bearing vines 29,000 acres, a total of 231,000 acres. This has been largely increased by heavy planting in the succeeding years so that the bearing acreage of 1905 and 1906 will doubtless reach 250,000 acres.

A large part of this area is devoted to the culture of Muscat grapes—at least 90,000 acres. When raisin prices are good the crop of these vineyards goes into drying trays. On the other hand, when raisin prices fall, a large part of the Muscat yield is carted to the winery presses. Added to this acreage should be the 22,500 acres on which table grapes are raised. Here the growers are accustomed to cull out the finer bearings for shipment, and to send the remainder to the wineries. So the wineries in the sweet wine district must be prepared to receive varying quantities of grapes for crushing, whether these were originally raised to be used upon the table, to be dried into raisins, or to be pressed for wine. One capacious winery, during a period of threatening rains, received and crushed over 1,000 tons of grapes in three days.

Beyond this fluctuating acreage given over to wine grapes, it is expected that within the next few years many thousand acres, not quoted above, will be devoted to this industry.

California is easily the most important factor in viticulture in the United States. The number of grape vines in this State exceeds the total number of vines in the eleven States next most important by 13,474,328 vines. Among the leading grape-producing States California is first and New York a bad second, followed by Ohio, Kansas, Michigan and others less active in this industry. Figures taken from the year book of the Department of Agriculture for 1904 are:

| State. | No. of Vines. | State. | No. of Vines. |
|---|---|---|---|
| California | 90,686,458 | Kansas | 5,762,700 |
| New York | 29,636,216 | Michigan | 5,232,450 |
| Ohio | 13,772,800 | Pennsylvania | 4,711,039 |

# How To Market California Wines.

PERCY T. MORGAN

THE science of enlisting the attention of consumers has been but little followed in the marketing of California wines.

It is true that a few individuals owning their own vineyards have from time to time attempted to create a demand for their branded product in original packages direct to the consumer, but for the most part these efforts have been local, or when more extended, have been doomed to failure, partly from lack of continued effort, but principally from the fact that the source of supply in an individual vineyard is too uncertain in quantity and irregular in quality to satisfy any permanent demand.

The larger dealers have confined themselves almost entirely to the distribution of California wines in bulk to distant jobbers, who either bottle them under brands known in their particular localities—perhaps with a domestic and perhaps with a foreign label—or sell them to retailers, who pursue a similar course.

Very few of these secondary distributors have the cellar facilities to properly hold wines in bottles until they attain the ripeness and finish which is essential to giving the satisfaction to consumers attained by foreign wines, which, after being carefully selected and matured, are bottled abroard under some well known label like those of the great bottlers of Bordeaux, Burgundy, Rhine and Moselle wines.

The few California houses which make a specialty of bottling wines are too small in influence and capital to make any great impression on the consuming public in favor of high grade California wines. It is not intended, however, to belittle their efforts, for they are in the right direction, and if their facilities for acquiring good wines and storing them in bottles for the proper length of time should be extended so that a product uniformly of standard grade and even quality is assured, the reputation of California wines cannot fail to be greatly benefited.

Only a very large house, however, with almost unlimited capital and the selection from million of gallons of wine, on the lines of the great Bordeaux houses, can hope successfully and permanently to create a market under a brand which will command the confidence of wine drinkers, whether in Maine or in Florida or in New York or California.

The same methods pursued in Bordeaux and on the Rhine must be followed in California. The fine wines must be bottled in the cellars in which they have matured and immense vaults must be established for the proper ripening of wines in bottles; then, through proper channels, wholesale and retail, these wines must be marketed in the original package, so that the consumer can be assured of a standard of excellence under labels which have everything to lose by any variation in quality or purity. Then so-called wines, which are often blends of manufactured stuff, which never saw the sunny skies of California, but which are injuring our reputation by being masqueraded under the name of California wines, should be driven from the Eastern markets by the strong hand of the law, which if properly directed is especially severe on those who practice the misbranding of articles, and this should be further strengthened by the passage in Congress of a National Pure Wine Law which would render dangerous interstate commerce in frauds.

Another reason why California wines are not more highly regarded in the East by connoisseurs is that, however carefully they may be aged and tended in bulk in California, all responsibility to their originators practically cease when they are loaded aboard the cars by the great California wine houses.

How they are handled thereafter and by whom, whether they are put out pure or adulterated and what prices are asked for them from consumers,

are matters of complete ignorance to the original handler. It is a common expression for an Easterner visiting California to exclaim, "why, we are never able in the East to obtain California wines like those even offered, included with a meal, at the restaurants, let alone those which are freely met with bottled under brands locally well known in California."

This condition of affairs must be altered before California wines in the great consuming markets of the East can become fashionable at the best tables and take the position their initial quality deserves alongside the best foreign vintages.

Steps by influential and responsible concerns are now being taken in this direction and within a year or two earnest and concerted efforts will undoubtedly be made to place California bottled wines in their true light before the American people.

The marketing of bulk wines for many years continues to be the most important branch of the California wine business, for the population which relies upon wine for a beverage must continue to receive it through the hands of convenient local distributing houses at a price which will encourage its greater consumption just as in Europe the local market is vastly more important to the industry than the smaller quantity of selected vintage which is consumed by the wealthy.

But attention must also be paid to that large class which is patriotic enough to prefer domestic wine and willing to pay an adequate price when, in comparison to foreign wines, its quality has been duly demonstrated.

# California Wines Under Their Own Flag.

CHARLES BUNDSCHU

THE great difficulty of creating for the wines of the Golden State an acknowledged recognition of superiority may be attributed to a considerable extent to the fact that they are not always traceable as sailing under their own flag. We know, and the statistics can easily verify the fact, that millions of gallons are shipped annually to the great trade centers of this continent, and yet comparatively speaking, we don't meet California wines in our travels as frequently as the volume of our shipments would warrant. There still exists an indefinable prejudice against the use of wine at a dinner table in the United States, and if wine is used at all, preference is given to European brands. This naturally stimulates the desire on the part of many of the distributers of California wines to utilize our selected vintages to represent foreign wines, thereby netting considerably higher financial returns than the truthful and honest denomination of their origin could possibly accomplish. Many so-called connoisseurs drink only the label—at least their verdict is seriously influenced by high-sounding outward indications. They revel over a bottle of Chateau Margue, Sauterne or Johannisberg, and would often sadly fall by the wayside if they knew the true and unsophisticated reality in connection with the product. As long as the wine is good, pure and healthful, no harm is done, except to the purse of the would-be connoisseur, and he generally can afford to pay for his ignorance. But on the other hand in all these instances the merits of the well selected superior California product fails to obtain the credit to which it would be fully entitled, while the cheap every day—hand-to-mouth—minimum wines (forming about eighty per cent of our shipments) are best known on account of their cheapness, and the general estimation in which they are held goes hand in hand with their monetary valuation.

The main difficulty lies in the intricate hardship connected with the

introduction of our vintage wines in bottles direct to the consumer. No distributer in the trade centers offers an inducement to the conscientious vineyard proprietor in California to handle his brand of wine in glass. The glory of French wine, the illustrious fame of the vintages of the Rhine and Moselle, the renown of Tokay and Lacrimae Christi, all have been originally built up by the most careful selection of wines in bottles. Every bottle acts as an emissary and as the most powerful agent to demonstrate quality and purity and every true and honest proprietory label on the bottle if judiciously applied, adds to the propaganda and promulgation of our California vintages. As matters stand now, principally the bulk goods, and these not always thoughtfully selected, find purchasers under rather more than competitive prices. Greater attention must be paid to the distribution of our home labeled bottled goods and even if it involves a great sacrifice, it will have to be done. Brands must be established on a more extended scale, and the policy that has heretofore been the policy of only a few of the leading vineyardists, must become prevalent in California as in other wine-producing countries. We must strive to bring our very best wines at reasonable prices to the great centers of consumption in bottles—in fact we must utilize our superior vintages as advertising agents to proclaim that there is as much distinction in California wines as there is in any other product; some are not so good, and they go for what they are; some are better and they are recognized; but the best must stand as a type, in the same sense as the best American woman represents the real type of American womanhood.

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# THE BROWN FAMILY IN CALIFORNIA

By JASON BROWN

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

IN WHICH WILLIAM SIMPSON TELLS OF GRAPE GROWING AND OTHER THINGS.

I SUPPOSE that two acres of red soil on the hillside isn't good for much and I had better leave it in pasture. Indeed, it does not make any too good pasture," I said to Simpson one Sunday afternoon, as we were walking over our California farm.

"Indeed, Jason, you were never more mistaken in your life," replied Simpson, as he caught a soft, red-looking bit of rock from the ground and crumpled it between his thumb and forefinger.

"See how that stuff powders up. That's granite, disintegrated granite, decayed granite. Its loose, porous, full of iron and other minerals. It makes the best sort of fruit land. Deciduous fruits, like Bartlett pears, for instance, grow on it to beat the band. It's great land for grapes, and the finest flaming Tokay grapes I ever saw were grown on this very sort of soil. They are a splendid table grape when grown right; they have a magnificant appearance and exquisite flavor; they attain large size and command a good market price."

Here Ethel, who is always observant, asked Simpson a question which brought out some important facts in grape growing.

"I notice you say that the iron in the soil is good for grapes, Mr. Simpson. Does the plant absorb the iron?"

"Now, Miss Ethel, I'm glad you asked that question," replied Simpson, nodding approvingly at our pretty daughter.

"Certain plants contain minerals in great quantities. When the soil contains these minerals the plant seems to thrive to an extent impossible without them. Dr. Gabriel Viaud, a French scientist, who has been making experiments to secure the absorption of useful medicinal substances by food plants, says that much may be accomplished by watering the soil with solutions of phosphorus, sulphur, potash, arsenic, and other minerals, which,

as trials have shown, are readily absorbed by the tissues of plants. An illustration of this fact is afforded by the ease with which certain kinds of flowers may be changed in color from pink to blue or from white to blue by sprinkling them with a solution of iron. The same effect, indeed, is produced when they are grown in a soil rich in iron."

"Why, I had no idea that plants assimilated minerals so readily," said my wife.

"Yes, indeed, they do, ma'aam," replied Simpson, "and if folks only knew it instead of taking pills for various ailments they could assist in giving the body the proper nutrition in the most direct and assimable form by eating vegetables and fruits containing the desired minerals. I think Dr. Viaud's conclusion that watering the soil with a solution containing minerals, feeds those minerals, in a way, to the plant only goes to show that where the earth contains these minerals they are readily absorbed by the plant."

"Goodness me, what a study they make of plant growing now-a-days? It has come to be quite a science," said Mrs. Simpson.

"That's so. It is a science," replied Simpson. "Agriculture calls for the same scientific thought that any business or profession does. And when a man is up-to-date and makes the study of plants his hobby, his results are correspondingly great."

"Do you recall any California men who have achieved success through the application of scientific principles to agriculture?" I asked.

"I certainly do," said Simpson. "Take the man who has achieved the greatest results in fig growing, and who has made money by it. He spent years establishing the caprification of the Smyrna fig. Take the man who has made the greatest success in olive growing; he is a scientist in his line. Take the leading grape-growers; they are familiar with the studies of generations of men in Europe and other countries. The same may be said of almost all other lines of agriculture. The men who have coupled energy and practical application with scientific principles are the men who are foremost."

"Then you do not think that to raise a great quantity of produce means success?" I asked.

"No, indeed, it doesn't," replied Simpson. "It may mean failure Success means doing some one thing a little better than the other man. The man who raises better table grapes than anybody else, or better olives, better figs, better oranges, is sure to succeed. If his goods are marked by their excellence he will command a ready market at a high price. I have in mind a man who has made a notable success in orange growing. He is an expert, a scientist. His fruit brings a high price. He goes to Europe almost every year while some of his less fortunate neighbors are wondering whether they will come out even.

"What we have we should try to have the best of its kind, and we should be content with nothing less," continued Simpson. "Mr. Burbank is showing the world what can be done, and though none of us can ever hope to duplicate his work, we can all profit by his example."

"Do you think a man like my Jason, who has a small diversified farm can use these scientific principles to advantage?" asked my wife.

"Of course I do, ma'am," said Simpson. "We were talking about this red earth here and how good it is for Flaming tokay grapes. Now, if Jason can raise the finest table grapes in the market, he can get almost fabulous prices for them because the very best of anything costs money."

"And all this means that it pays to raise a good article," I said.

"Exactly," replied Simpson. "Now I guess my team is getting restless, and if you folks are ready we will all drive over to the Estudillo rancho for dinner."

And so we all had a mighty good dinner at Neighbor Simpson's that evening.

(To be continued.)

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